Setting our Sails

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Acts.27:40 Sothe anchors were cut away and left in the sea, while the crew unlashed the ropes that tied the rudders, hoisted the foresail to the breeze and headed for the beach.

INTRO. Old Ironsides under full sail.
Father coming around the horn in a sailing vessel.

Text chosen to present a picture of a vessel hoisting sail and getting under way.

Read about a man who had built a boat, ha had taken his cargo on board, set some sails, and taking his seat at the helm steered for the open sea. But he soon discovered that he w was not making much headway, tho a strong west wind was blowing. Cross currents and incoming tide interfered. Finally after a vain, long tiresome effort, the man remembered some sails that he had put away under the hatches, and he soon got them out and set them to the breeze. Instantly the pull of the additional sail sent his boat skipping along like a sea-bird.

Is'nt this a parable of life? Especially of spiritual life? How often we endeavor to press on, even with a favorable wind blowing, but because of cross-currents and adverse tide, we can make no progress.

The season of Lent is a good time to remember that we have sails in our hatches, which, if we will hoist to the wind of God's Spirit, will enable us to make progress in the right direction as we sail the sea of life.

I. The Sail of Bible Study.

Dr. Robert Moffatt was a great missionary to Africa. One day a native came to him in in distress, stating that his hunting dog had swallowed two pages of the Bible and now would be useless as ahunting dog. The native argued that since the Bible tamed down fierce warriors so that they no longer cared for cruel warfare, it wou have the same effect on his dog.

The Rev. Dr. Fitchett once invited to go into the country to a certain house to perform a wedding ceremony. He asked for a Bible, but none was available, so a sear ch was made thru the house. At last in th attic they found an old sea-chest and in it was a Bible. Singularly enough on the outside of the chest was written, "Not wanted on the voyage".

That is how many treat God's Word. They banish it from their homes, their business, their pleasures and from their very lives. Of course they suffer accordingly. He who would reach his God-destine goal, should study God's Word.

The season of Lent is a good time to take the old Book out of the attic chest and hoist it to the winds of progress.

II. The sail of prayer.

Prayer is the mainsail of every life-sailing craft.

Prayer works miracles.

Often sailing vessels have to wait for a breeze to arise before they can set sail. But when one sets the sail of prayer, God's Spirit immediately fills it and he feels its power.

The dweller in Toronto

Wants light and presses a button- presto- light.

Wants hot water for shaving, presses a button and has hot water. Niagara gives him light and hot water. Naiagara enables him to telephone t distant cities. Niagara takes him up town on the trolly-car. Niagara is almost an exhaustless power for his many needs.

There is another power we all need to go thru life worthily-moral power. Prayer gives one that power. Paul says, "I can do all things thru Christ who strengeneth me"

If we have'nt set up the sail of prayer on our good ship-Life-, now is the time to do it.

A jelly-fish can only flounder thru the water, but a fish with a back-bone can swim rapidly and accurately.

In our day of earth-quake philosophy, toppling over all law and principle and custom,we need strong moral back-bones. When we hoist the sail of prayer and get into direct touch with God, we are given moral power to proceed rapidly and in the right direction.

Paul Rader's account of the 3 preachers who walked

III. The sail of meditation.

A certain man in his dairy gives this testimony:"Every right-constituted man has his time of retreat where he may be his true self, and where, by dint of rest and recollection, he may maintain his true life, and from which he can compel the whole world to submit itself to his soul's interest."

The Greeks had a foot race in which each contestant was given a lighted torch, and the laurel wreath was for the one who came in firsf with his torch alight. Someone commenting upon this custom said,"Success in life is not merely getting there, but, more important still, in keeping the light of God burning in our hurrying souls".

As we approach this coming Easter, let us light our torch at the Cross of Christ and keep it burning all the way. Then, whetever else happens, we shall reach the goal of Life, the harbor of true success, the haven of eternal peace.

During the remainder of this Lenten season let us keep these sails hoisted, the study of God's word, prayerful communion with our Heavenly Father, and the exercise of meditation.